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**Government Course Syllabus**

*GOVT 2306 – 0034*

*Fall 2017, (37824)*

*Spring Branch Campus, 530pm – 650pm*

3 Semester Credit Hours

48 Contact Hours

*16 Weeks*

*Face to Face*

**Instructor Name**

*Kevin Jefferies*

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**Government Department Chair**

Evelyn Ballard

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713-718-2490

Note: if you have a problem with your Government course, please contact your instructor before contacting me.

**Office Hours**

**Office Hours: 6pm – 7pm**

**Course Description** *(use one or the other)*

Texas-- Origin and development of the Texas constitution, structure and powers of state and local government, federalism and inter-governmental relations, political participation, the election process, public policy, and the political culture of Texas.

**Prerequisite, Co-requisite**

Must have passed or co-enrolled in English 1301 (Composition I) as a co-requisite.

**Academic Program Learning Outcomes:**

GOVT 2306

\* Identify the structure, functions and nature of the institutions of government in Texas.

\* Understand and describe the development, purpose and attributes of the Texas Constitution

\* Identify the policy making process and comprehend the outcomes of state and local policy in Texas.

\* Understand how political values and ideas are developed and expressed and the means through which one may engage in the political system.

\* Comprehend how interest groups, parties and the structure of the political system influence political participation.

**Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)**

1. Identify and describe the institutions of American national government. GOVT 2305

2. Identify and describe the institutions of the State of Texas government. GOVT 2306

3. Identify and evaluate information sources for political news, data, and opinion. GOVT 2306

4. Analyze the effects of the historical, social, political, economic, and cultural forces on politics and government. GOVT 2306

5. Recognize and assume the responsibilities of citizenship by developing one’s critical thinking skills, engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media. GOVT 2305

**Core Objectives**

The Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) mandates that the core curriculum must ensure that students will develop the essential knowledge and skills they need to be successful in college, in a career, in their communities, and in life. Through the Texas Core Curriculum, students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning. Students enrolled in GOVT 2305/2306 core curriculum courses will complete assessments designed to measure the following core objectives:

Critical Thinking Skills—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information

Communication Skills—to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication

Personal Responsibility—to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

· Social Responsibility—to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

Student assessment of proficiencies mandated by THECB may include testing, projects, or assignments.

**Course Calendar**

**Course Calendar**   
  
August 28 – December 17  
  
Week One: August 28 – September 3  
- Chapter One: Texas Culture and Diversity  
  
Week Two: September 4 – 10  
No class on Labor Day  
- Chapter Two: Texas in the Federal System  
  
Week Three: September 11 – 17  
- Chapter Three: The Texas Constitution in Perspective  
- Chapter Four: Voting and Elections  
  
Week Four: September 18 – 24  
- Review and Test One  
   
Week Five: September 25 – October 1  
- Chapter Five: Political Parties  
  
Week Six: October 2 - 8   
- Chapter Six: Interest Groups  
  
Week Seven: October 9 - 15  
- Chapter Seven: The Legislature  
  
Week Eight: October 16 – 22  
- Chapter Eight: The Texas Legislative Branch  
  
Week Nine: October 23 - 29  
- Review and Test Two  
  
Week Ten: October 30 – November 5  
- Chapter Nine: The Judiciary  
  
Week Eleven: November 6 - 12  
- Chapter Ten: Law and Due Process  
  
Week Twelve: November 13 - 19  
- Chapter Eleven: Local Government  
  
Week Thirteen: November 20 – 26  
- No class Thanksgiving  
- Chapter Twelve: Public Policy in Texas  
  
Week Fourteen: November 27 – December 3  
- Review and Test 3   
  
Week Fifteen: December 4 – 10  
- Review the semester  
  
Week Sixteen: December 11 - 17  
- Finals Week  
- Paper Due the day of the final *Required: Include Exam Dates, College Holidays*

*Preferred: Schedule of reading assignments and class topics with dates*

**Instructional Methods**

*Lectures, simulations, discussions, etc.*

**Student Assignments**

*Description of all graded assignments.*

*Notes: do not give grades simply for attending class. If you award grades for participation, there must be an objective measure for these points. Awarding everyone 100% for participation is not objective.*

*Extra credit must be minimal as far as points – not enough points to raise the student from one letter grade to a higher grade. The content must be substantial – if you have a question about whether an assignment would be considered substantial, ask the chair or one of the associate chairs.*

*The government department requires that 25% of a student’s grade must be based on written work – objective exams alone are not enough.*

*There should be a minimum of 5 assignments. There should be at least 3 exams.*

**Make-up Policy**

*You have the option of offering or not offering make-ups, but you must state your policy clearly here.* It is not a good idea to have no make-ups as there are usually going to be cases where make-ups are necessary. If you do not want to have make-ups, I suggest having enough assignments and/or exams so you can drop a grade.

**Grading Scale**

90-100%= A

80-89% = B

70-79% = C

60-69% = D

less than 60% = F

*You may use a total point system, but it must conform to the HCC grading scale (above)*

**Instructor Grading Criteria**

*Explain specifically how grade will be calculated. If you use a weighted average, it is helpful to explain to the students how that is calculated. Your total should be 100%.*

***Note from chair: Please do not use attendance as part of the grade calculation. This may be okay for High School, but is not appropriate for college classes.***

***If you chose to use participation as part of the grade, the method by which you are grading that participation must be indicated on the syllabus (be very clear) and must be an objective measure that I can use to explain how participation was graded in your class. Participation grades, if not calculated objectively often lead to complaints. I must be able to explain from your syllabus exactly how that is calculated.***

**Instructional Materials**

Textbook, other reading materials, scantrons (if applicable)

**HCC Policies**

**ADA Policy:** If you have any special needs which affect your ability to learn in this class, please inform me. Appropriate steps will be taken to assist you with your needs. Any student with a documental disability (physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the ADA counselor at the beginning of each semester. There is a Disability Support Services Office at each campus. To find the name of the ADA counselor at your campus, visit [www.hccs.edu](http://www.hccs.edu), then click future students, scroll down the page and click on the words Disability Information. Faculty members are authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 requires that institutions have policies that protect students’ rights with regard to sex/gender discrimination. Information regarding these rights are in the HCC website under Students-Anti-discrimination. Students who are pregnant and require accommodations should contact any of the ADA Counselors for assistance.

**Student Rights and Responsibilities:** It is important that every student understands and conforms to respectful behavior while at HCC. Sexual misconduct is not condoned and will be addressed promptly. Know your rights and how to avoid these difficult situations.

Log in to [www.edurisksolutions.org](http://www.edurisksolutions.org) Sign in using your HCC student e-mail account, then go to the button at the top right that says **Login** and enter your student number.

**Scholastic Dishonesty:**

HCCS students are responsible for conducting themselves with honor and integrity in fulfilling course requirements. Penalties and/or disciplinary proceedings may be initiated by HCC System officials against a student accused of scholastic dishonesty.

"Scholastic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating on a test includes but is not limited to: Copying from another student's test paper; using unauthorized materials during a test, unauthorized collaboration with another student during a test; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of a test; and bribing another person to obtain a copy of a test. Plagiarism includes the appropriation of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work. Collusion includes the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work.

*Enter your specific policies dishonesty*

*Attendance: Enter your specific policy. College policy allows students to be dropped by the instructor for exceeding absences, but you must be careful in crafting your policy so that it is enforceable and reasonable.*

**Withdrawals:**

Students who take a course for the third time or more must now pay significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities. At HCC, it is an additional $50 per credit hour. If you are considering course withdrawal because you are not earning passing grades, confer with your instructor/ counselor as early as possible about your study habits, reading and writing homework, test-taking skills, attendance, course participation, and opportunities for tutoring or other assistance that might be available. Also, the state of Texas has passed a new law limiting new students (as of Fall 2007) to no more than six withdrawals throughout their academic career in obtaining a baccalaureate degree.

*The drop/withdrawal date this semester is XXXXXXXXXXX.*

**Repeating Courses:**

As a result of recent Texas legislative changes, please be advised that HCC is charging additional tuition for students who enroll in the same class three or more times at HCC. While it is the hope of HCC that students will be successful in their first attempt at classes, we realize that life demands, academic struggles, and other issues may

result in students needing to take the same class more than once. Speaking with an advisor will help you develop student success skills, improving your overall academic performance. If a student

repeats a course in which a grade (A-F) has been received, the highest grade received at HCC is the permanent grade for the course and will be used in computing the GPA. All grades earned in a given course will be reflected on the transcript. Other colleges may compute the GPA differently than HCC.

**HCC Student Handbook:**

Please note that it is each student’s responsibility to read and be familiar with the HCC Student Handbook. Please see:

<http://central.hccs.edu/students/student-handbook/>

**HCC Online**

The HCC Online Student Handbook contains policies and procedures unique to the online student. Students should have reviewed the handbook as part of the mandatory orientation. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the handbook's contents. The handbook contains valuable information, answers, and resources, such as DE contacts, policies and procedures (how to drop, attendance requirements, etc.), student services (ADA, financial aid, degree planning, etc.), course information, testing procedures, technical support, and academic calendars. Refer to the DE Student Handbook by visiting this link:

<http://de.hccs.edu/media/houston-community-college/distance-education/student-services/pdf/2015-HCC-DE-Student-Handbook-%28Revised-5_28_15%29_will.pdf>